

Roll Call

A regular meeting of the Kalamazoo City Commission was held on Tuesday, July 5, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers at City Hall.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Mayor David Anderson
Vice Mayor Don Cooney
Qianna Decker
Jeanne Hess
Stephanie Hoffman
Esteven Juarez
Chris Praedel

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

None

Also present were Deputy City Manager Jeff Chamberlain, City Attorney Clyde Robinson, and City Clerk Scott Borling.

Invocation

The invocation, given by Minister Caressa Langley of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adoption of the Agenda

By unanimous consent the City Commission adopted its meeting agenda as presented.

2022-00

Communications:
Presentation on
Downtown Street
Projects

When an opportunity was given for communications, Deputy City Manager Ritsema introduced City Planner Christina Anderson, Assistant Public Services Director Anthony Ladd, Traffic Engineer Dennis Randolph, and Community Planning and Economic Development Director Rebekah Kik, who delivered a presentation entitled *Streets for All: Creating a Connected City*. A copy of the slides from this presentation was filed with the papers for this meeting.

Public Comments

Next, when an opportunity was given for general public comments, the following people addressed the City Commission:

In Person Comments

Dean Hauck, City resident, spoke about 1965 conversion of downtown streets from two-way to one-way traffic and the negative impact of that conversion on businesses. Ms. Hauck described how she revived her father's business, the Michigan News Agency. Ms. Hauck expressed support for converting downtown streets back to two-way traffic.

Lauri Holmes and John Kreuzer, City residents, requested that the City restore limited parking at the Winchell Avenue entrance to Asylum Lake Preserve.

Ryan Smith, City resident and a representative of the Democratic Socialists of America, asked the City Commission to approve a resolution supporting the Medicare for All Act.

Ashante Collins, City resident, expressed support for the allocation of \$550,000 to address gun violence and asked when the remaining \$450,000 would be spent.

Dick Shilts, non-resident, Andy Lehman, City resident, and Cordelia Greer, City resident, read the text of the resolution the City Commission adopted in

2021 Declaring Gun Violence a Public Health Crisis and Allocating Funding for Ongoing Community Violence Intervention.

Public Comments
(cont'd)

Cathy Phason, non-resident, thanked Commissioners for attending the Gun Violence Resource and Resilience Rallies and thanked organizations that collaborated on these events. Ms. Phason read a description of the event from a June 29th Second Wave Media article.

Paula Chomis, City resident, indicated she was a cyclist and expressed support for the installation of a sidewalk on Stadium Drive. Ms. Chomis spoke about bike safety and stated she did not feel safe in her neighborhood.

Charlae Davis, City resident and Executive Director of ISAAC, asked that the City Commission approve the allocation of funds to support organizations working on gun violence. Ms. Davis spoke about the importance of collaborations among organizations.

Michael Doyle, City resident, spoke about the challenge of navigating brick sidewalk ramps with a wheelchair. Mr. Doyle asked that the bricks be removed.

Jeff Messer, City resident, spoke about petitions being circulated by Rank MI Vote to amend the City Charter to allow ranked choice voting for City elections. A copy of Mr. Messer's written remarks was filed with the papers for this meeting.

2022-00

Jack Urban, City resident, spoke about his support for Ranked Choice Voting. A copy of Mr. Urban's written remarks was filed with the papers for this meeting.

2022-00

Call-In Comments

Tina McClinton, City resident, asked the City to fix the storm sewers in the Southtown Neighborhood and accept Southtown as an official neighborhood.

Maggie Adams, City resident, raised concerns about Abraham Lincoln and questioned whether the City should place a statue of him in Bronson Park.

An anonymous City resident spoke about drug deals and littering on Bessie Street and requested law enforcement.

Consent Agenda items were presented as follows with a recommendation to approve the items and authorize the City Manager to sign all documents on behalf of the city:

Consent Agenda

- approval of the purchase of play equipment from Gametime/Sinclair Recreation through the Omnia cooperative purchasing program in the amount of \$215,000.

2022-00

- approval of the final design for a statue in Bronson Park honoring Abraham Lincoln's 1856 visit to Kalamazoo as proposed by the Kalamazoo Abraham Lincoln Institute.

2022-00

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 2022-00 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - approval of a contract with Santiago Services, LLC to perform nuisance trash and debris removal services in the amount of \$453,000; and approval of a budget amendment to the Solid Waste Special Revenue Fund for the same amount to cover the cost of this service. |
| 2022-00 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - approval of a one-year contract extension for the purchase of 75% phosphoric acid from Carus LLC in the amount of \$472,500; and approval of a wastewater budget amendment in the amount of \$253,897 to cover the increased cost. |
| 2022-00 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - approval of a contract supplemental and wastewater budget amendment in the amount of \$499,700.40 for the purchase of 260FL Polymer for the primary and secondary solids dewatering process from Solenis LLC. |
| 2022-00 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - approval and acceptance of an easement with Midwest Energy and Communications for electric service to the 6th Street South Water Tower. |
| 2022-00 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - approval of the sale of 3408 Hoover Street to Kalamazoo Neighborhood Housing Services for the price of \$500. |

Commissioner Juarez, seconded by Commissioner Hess, moved to approve the consent agenda requests and authorize the City Manager to sign all related documents on behalf of the City.

With a roll call vote this motion passed unanimously.

AYES: Commissioners Decker, Hess, Hoffman, Juarez, Praedel*, Vice Mayor Cooney, Mayor Anderson

NAYS: None

*At the time of the vote, Commissioner Praedel abstained from voting on Item G-2, approval of the final design for a statue of Abraham Lincoln in Bronson Park, due to a conflict of interest, as he was the Secretary of the Kalamazoo Abraham Lincoln Institute.

Regular Agenda

Regular Agenda items were considered next.

2022-00
First Reading of an
Ordinance to Amend
Chapter 22 – General
Crimes and Offenses

City Attorney Robinson provided an overview of the proposed changes to Chapter 22 of the Kalamazoo City Code, which were designed to clean up the chapter and decriminalize portions of it.

In response to questions from Commissioner Praedel, City Attorney Robinson confirmed the change in language in some sections from “guilty” to “responsible” was due to the shift from violations being criminal offenses to civil infractions. City Attorney Robinson explained that references to blocking streets in Sections 22-18 and 22-19 were removed because those violations were covered in state law. City Attorney Robinson indicated the sections dealing with dust from businesses were moved to the chapter on nuisances because dust was a nuisance.

An opportunity was given for public comments on an ordinance to amend Chapter 22 of the Kalamazoo City Code – General Crimes and Offenses, but no comments were offered.

Commissioner Praedel, seconded by Commissioner Decker, moved to offer for first reading an ordinance to amend Chapter 22 of the Kalamazoo City Code – General Crimes and Offenses.

Prior to a vote on the motion, Commissioner Hess thanked City Attorney Robinson and his staff for the time they spent on revising Chapter 22.

With a roll call vote this motion passed unanimously.

AYES: Commissioners Decker, Hess, Hoffman, Juarez, Praedel, Vice Mayor Cooney, Mayor Anderson

NAYS: None

City Attorney Robinson recognized Assistant City Attorney Sarah Wenzlick and former Deputy City Attorney Richard Cherry for their work on this ordinance.

Commissioner Juarez, Commissioner Hoffman, and Vice Mayor Cooney offered remarks on a recommendation from the Gun Violence Prevention Subcommittee to allocate American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funding to support non-profit organizations that were working to address gun violence.

In response to a question from Commissioner Hess, Vice Mayor Cooney indicated there had been meetings with some Kalamazoo County Commissioners and the County Administration, and he expressed hope that the County would contribute funds to this effort.

Commissioner Hoffman noted gun violence was an issue for Kalamazoo County and not just the City of Kalamazoo.

Alyssa Stewart, Chief Impact Officer for the United Way of South Central Michigan, spoke about the partnership between the City and United Way and stated the goal of the gun violence prevention initiative was to resource organizations that had been doing the work of addressing gun violence with little to no support. Ms. Stewart indicated the United Way would have a streamlined grant process and would walk alongside applicant organizations, who may not have ever received federal funds.

In response to questions from Commissioners, Ms. Stewart provided the following information:

- in order to shorten the application and funding timeframe, the process would be a closed process, which meant only specific grantees would be invited to apply. From application submission to fund disbursement, the process should take 10 weeks.
- the United Way would be learning about the use of ARPA funds as the process unfolded. Grants would be funded by one entity (either the City or the County) so the source funds were not co-mingled, and the grants would be two-year grants to take pressure off the recipient organizations to spend the dollars quickly. The United Way would look to the City for direction on additional/ongoing funding.

2022-00

First Reading of an Ordinance to Amend Chapter 22 – General Crimes and Offenses (cont'd)

2022-00

Allocation of Funds to the United Way for Gun Violence Prevention Programs

2022-00

Allocation of Funds to
the United Way for Gun
Violence Prevention
Programs (cont'd)

- fiscal partnerships would allow activist organizations that did not have 501(c)(3) non-profit status to participate and receive funding.
- it would be the United Way's goal to collaborate with foundations to expand the funding sources for this work. Gun violence prevention would be an agenda item for a future funders meeting.

An opportunity was given for public comments on the allocation of \$550,000 of the \$1,000,000 Community Violence Prevention ARPA State and Local Fiscal Relief funds to the United Way of South Central Michigan for grants to non-profit organizations for eligible activities in direct response to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, but no comments were offered.

Commissioner Juarez, seconded by Commissioner Hess, moved to approve the allocation of \$550,000 of the \$1,000,000 Community Violence Prevention ARPA State and Local Fiscal Relief funds to the United Way of South Central Michigan for grants to non-profit organizations for eligible activities in direct response to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic; and authorize the City Manager to sign all related documents.

Prior to a vote on the motion, Commissioner Decker remarked on the need to make this work sustainable.

Commissioner Praedel noted this was a philanthropic opportunity for people to participate in the work against gun violence.

Mayor Anderson noted the three Commissioners on the Gun Violence Prevention Subcommittee were not on the City Commission when the public health crisis resolution was adopted. Mayor Anderson remarked on how the values of the Commissioner remained consistent even as the work passed from person to person.

With a roll call vote this motion passed unanimously.

AYES: Commissioners Decker, Hess, Hoffman, Juarez, Praedel, Vice Mayor Cooney, Mayor Anderson

NAYS: None

City Manager's Report

Deputy City Manager Chamberlain stated the City Administration would keep the Commission updated on the gun violence prevention initiative and the many other projects staff were working on.

2022-00

Resolution 22-35
Supporting the
Medicare for All Act

Vice Mayor Cooney thanked the Democratic Socialists of America bringing forward a resolution supporting the Medicare for All Act. Vice Mayor Cooney offered remarks about this federal legislation asked Commissioners to adopt the resolution.

When an opportunity was given for public comments on a resolution supporting H.R. 1976, the federal Medicare for All Act of 2021, the following people addressed the City Commission:

An anonymous speaker remarked on ways that Medicare for All would address many of the community issues the City Commission had discussed during the meeting.

Commissioner Hess, seconded by Commissioner Decker, moved to adopt a **RESOLUTION** supporting H.R. 1976, the federal Medicare for All Act of 2021. Prior to a vote on the motion, Commissioner Praedel noted the US spent the most on healthcare but ranked low in health outcomes.

Commissioner Hess stated she wanted her grandkids to live in a world where healthcare was not something people had to fight for.

Commissioner Decker stated Medicare for All would benefit many communities and groups of people.

Commissioner Juarez stated he was a diabetic and commented on the expense of test strips and medications.

Mayor Anderson noted he was not a supporter of symbolic actions, and he commented on the ability of resolutions to divide people while having little impact. Mayor Anderson expressed support for this resolution but offered that a broader consideration of the issue was needed. Mayor Anderson stated the main issue was making sure everyone had healthcare, and he questioned whether the Medicare for All Act was the only way or the best way to accomplish this goal. Mayor Anderson stated the Medicare Trust Fund would go into a deficit position in 2023 and would be depleted by 2028, and he stated addressing this situation should be a priority.

With a roll call vote this motion passed unanimously.

AYES: Commissioners Decker, Hess, Hoffman, Juarez, Praedel, Vice Mayor Cooney, Mayor Anderson

NAYS: None

Finally, an opportunity was given for miscellaneous comments from City Commissioners.

Commissioner Decker thanked City staff for their presentations. Commissioner Decker expressed hope that the new CPED position would develop a social equity plan template so that every business would be required to provide the same information. Commissioner Decker thanked the Michigan News Agency for being in Kalamazoo. Commissioner Decker thanked the members of the Gun Violence Prevention Task Force for their work, and she remarked on the need to make the non-profit organizations sustainable.

Commissioner Juarez urged people to think about how much they needed each other and the change that happened when they communicated that need to those around them. Commissioner Juarez remarked that attendance at the Gun Violence Resource and Resilience Rallies kept increasing with successive events.

Commissioner Hoffman remarked on the importance of people coming back to the table when they disagreed, which was possible if there were shared goals.

Commissioner Praedel stated he was thankful to be working with City staff, who were some of the best and brightest people. Commissioner Praedel spoke about Abraham Lincoln's speech in Kalamazoo in 1856 and the proposed Lincoln statue in Bronson Park.

2022-00

Resolution 22-35
Supporting the
Medicare for All Act
(cont'd)

Commissioner
Comments

Commissioner
Comments (cont'd)

Commissioner Hess thanked Consumers Energy for their collaboration with the City to benchmark commercial building energy usage. Commissioner Hess stated the Lincoln statue could be a vision for what the community could become, and she noted that Lincoln himself was a victim of gun violence. Commissioner Hess thanked staff for the presentation on street projects, and she thanked the Gun Violence Prevention Subcommittee members for their passion, collaboration and work. Commissioner Hess read quote about gun violence from Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot.

Vice Mayor Cooney thanked Laura Lam for her work with the Gun Violence Prevention Subcommittee. Vice Mayor Cooney spoke about Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King, Jr. and stated the City Commission wanted to make the City better.

Mayor Anderson expressed appreciation for his colleagues on the Commission.

Closed Session

Commissioner Juarez, seconded by Vice Mayor Cooney, moved to go into closed session to consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute.

Prior to a vote on the motion and in response to a question from Mayor Anderson, City Attorney Robinson indicated the City Commission would not need to return to open session to take action.

With a roll call vote this motion passed unanimously.

AYES: Commissioners Decker, Hess, Hoffman, Juarez, Praedel, Vice Mayor Cooney, Mayor Anderson

NAYS: None

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:54 p.m.

Scott A. Borling
City Clerk

Approved by the City Commission on: _____

This page was left blank intentionally.